

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNCTAD
SUBJECT: UNCTAD: GROUP B BEGINS PREPARATIONS FOR UNCTAD V

REFERENCE: GENEVA 7337

1. SUMMARY: GROUP B GENEVA HELD ITS FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING FOR UNCTAD V UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GERHARDT HENZE OF THE FRG MISSION. THE MEETING REVIEWED G-77 STATE OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE AND DECIDED TO CALL IN UNCTAD DIVISION CHIEFS TO BRIEF THEM ON THE SECRETARIAT'S VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GERHARDT HENZE, OF THE FRG MISSION, AND NEXT OVERALL COORDINATOR, GROUP B HELD ITS FIRST, AND VERY PRELIMINARY, MEETING TO BEGIN PREPARATIONS FOR UNCTAD V. AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION OF THE STATUS OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR UNCTAD V BY THE G-77 REVEALED THAT GROUP HAS MADE LITTLE PROGRESS ON SUBSTANTIVE POINTS FOR THE AGENDA, BEING UNABLE TO DECIDE WHETHER UNCTAD V SHOULD BE BASICALLY A REVIEW OF PROGRESS SINCE UNCTAD IV OR

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WHETHER NEW IDEAS AND PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR THE FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE. THE G-77 HAS ORGANIZED ITSELF INTO SUB-GROUPS, ONE EACH FOR THE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE AREAS OF UNCTAD AND A SPECIAL GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION OF POST-MTN ACTIONS WITHIN UNCTAD.

3. THERE WAS A DEARTH OF IDEAS WITHIN GROUP B ON EITHER

SUBSTANTIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE AGENDA OR EVEN ON HOW TO PROCEED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE. IT WAS, IN THE END, DECIDED TO EMULATE THE G-77 AND CALL IN THE DIRECTORS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE DIVISIONS TO HEAR THEIR COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE UNCTAD V PREPARATIONS. IT IS HOPED THAT SUCH A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE SECRETARIAT COULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE SUMMER VACATIONS.

COMMENT: WHILE THE G-77 IS NOT NOW ABLE TO COME TO OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNCTAD V, SEVERAL THEMES SEEM TO BE GAINING ASCENDANCY IN THE G-77 CONSIDERATIONS: (1) DUSTING OFF OF THE PRE-UNCTAD IV MANILA DECLARATION AND REOPENING DISCUSSION OF THE ITEMS NOT APPROVED IN NAIROBI TOGETHER WITH A REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE NAIROBI RESOLUTIONS; (2) DEVELOPMENT OF AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAM FOR EDCD ACTIVITIES, MOST OF WHICH WOULD INVOLVE THE UNCTAD SECRETARIAT SERVING AS DIRECT AND EXCLUSIVE SUPPORT FOR THE G-77 (SEE DOC TD/B/702 FOR A PARTIAL LISTING OF SUCH ACTIVITIES); (3) RESTRUCTURING OF UNCTAD ITSELF, WHICH UP TO NOW BASICALLY CONSIST OF A DRIVE TO RESTRUCTURE THE SECRETARIAT SO THAT OVER 50 OF THE STAFF MEMBERS ARE DRAWN FROM G-77 COUNTRIES (PRESENTLY 50 ARE FROM GROUP B COUNTRIES); AND (4) AN ASSERTION THAT SINCE THE 0.7 ODA AID TARGETS WERE NOT MET, THE CONFERENCE SHOULD ESTABLISH TARGETS OF 1.5 OR MORE FOR THE DD III TO "COMPENSATE" FOR FAILURE TO MEET THE DD II TARGET. IT APPEARS INEVITABLE FROM THE METHOD WITH WHICH THE G-77 IS PROCEEDING WITH ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREPARATION THAT IT WILL DEVELOP A LONG AND GENERALLY UNACCEPTABLE "SHOPPING LIST", AS USUAL. THE OPPORTUNITY STILL EXISTS FOR GROUP B TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE TO PRESENT SOME OF ITS OWN AGENDA ITEMS, BUT, JUDGING FROM THE DESULTORY GROUP B DISCUSSION, THERE DOES NOT YET SEEM TO BE MUCH DESIRE OR SENSE OF URGENCY TO DO SO. VANDEN HEUVEL

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